

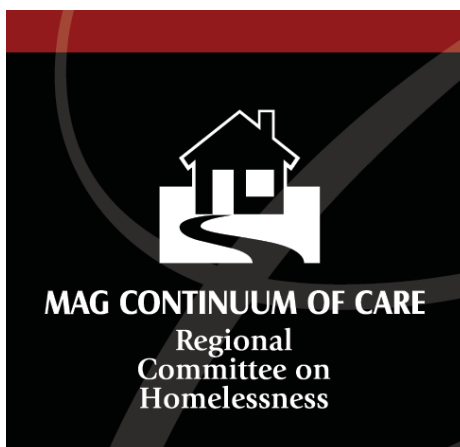
Human Services Leaders Engage in New Way of Thinking

A new business approach that focuses on an organization's strengths to develop solutions may soon be applied to help end homelessness.

On January 7, 2008, more than 140 local leaders from municipalities, nonprofit agencies, and the business sector launched an innovative effort to ensure that every person has a positive place in the community. The event took place at the Maricopa Association of Governments' (MAG) Annual Appreciation Luncheon and workshop for the MAG Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness.

The event utilized a concept known as "Appreciative Inquiry," a study of human systems when they are at their best. The model is based on positive thinking that results in powerful actions to create change.

"Appreciative Inquiry centers on relationships, which are critical to solving problems," said MAG Regional Council Chair James Cavanaugh, who served as a speaker at the event.



"Organizations are encouraged to interview stakeholders to determine their strengths. They can then harness that positive energy in developing and implementing the strategies that will lead to success."

The Continuum of Care workshop utilized Appreciative Inquiry to reframe the discussion to go beyond ending homelessness to also find ways to integrate people back into the community as valued and productive citizens. While the human services leaders were focused on homelessness,

Cavanaugh says the lessons of Appreciative Inquiry can be applied to any situation.

"No matter what issue we are addressing, we will always be more successful if we work collaboratively from our strengths," he said.

For some, the approach represents a shift from identifying problems to identifying solutions. Instead of conducting a needs assessment or gaps analysis, for example, which emphasize the negative, Appreciative Inquiry gleans insights by



The Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness chair, Phoenix Councilmember Greg Stanton (left) and vice chair, Don Keuth of the Phoenix Community Alliance (right), presented the Outstanding Achievement Award to Annette Stein, and the 2007 Star Award to Michael McQuaid, at the recent appreciation luncheon.

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Mayor James M. Cavanaugh,
Goodyear


Message From the Chair

In 2008, a major milestone will be accomplished in Arizona transportation history. This fall, the final segment of our Regional Freeway System, the Red Mountain Freeway, will be completed. This significant achievement is a reminder that local elected officials in 1985 believed this could be accomplished, and of how, in the years following, many other local elected officials stepped up to provide policy direction to ensure that this system would be completed.

have risen nationally and world-wide. These cost pressures have also impacted the transportation system across the rest of the state, which has failed to keep up with state growth that leads the nation.

With these challenges, we need to take a step back and think about what would have happened if elected officials in 1985 had not taken action. We would have I-10 and I-17. No loops, no distributed job centers, no vibrant regional economy.

Taking lessons from the past, in 1985, we had a regional freeway plan that outlined what voters would receive if they voted yes. In 2004, after four years of study, we had a well-thought-out multimodal plan which voters understood, and the citizens voted yes. Our challenge today is to create a similar comprehensive statewide transportation plan that voters can support. This is best accomplished with elected officials, business leaders and citizens working together throughout the state, to ensure that all voices are represented and everyone can feel ownership of the plan. We are then ready to ask voters of the state to invest in our collective future.

I am confident that by working jointly on a statewide effort, we can succeed. To be successful, I believe we need to present the citizens of Arizona with a plan that has been developed from the bottom up, one that offers a variety of solutions to ensure transportation mobility for future generations of Arizona. Our history has shown that when the planning is done right, and residents are vested in the solution, everyone wins. 

"Our challenge today is to create a comprehensive statewide transportation plan that voters can support."

In 2004, elected officials and the business community came forward in a united effort to pass Proposition 400. This passage was critical to maintain our quality of life in this region.

Despite these successes, we continue to experience incredible pressure on our regional transportation system, especially as the costs of commodities



MAGAZine is a quarterly newsletter of the Maricopa Association of Governments. It focuses on the issues and concerns of the cities, towns and tribal communities of Maricopa County. If you know of a friend or colleague who would like to receive MAGAZine, please call the MAG office, (602) 254-6300.

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Voices From the Council



2008 promises to be an exciting year for public transportation in the Valley with the December startup of the 20-mile light rail starter line. This is also the year our community embarks on a 24-month study with METRO to investigate the extension of high-capacity transit to west Chandler and south Tempe residents. The importance of providing our residents with options to their automobiles is imperative if we are to progress as healthy, vibrant and sustainable communities.

— Chandler Mayor Boyd Dunn

On January 8, 2008, the Scottsdale City Council unanimously adopted the city's Transportation Master Plan, the first completed comprehensive look at the city's transportation network for the next 20 years. One of the unique components of this effort is the development of a local version of the MAG TRANSCAD model, which was used to analyze the city's long-term roadway capacity needs. This could only have been done with the support of MAG in providing member community access to the TRANSCAD model and with cooperation and input from MAG's excellent modeling staff. The city's new transportation model will be used in the future to assist in meeting the adopted plan's long term goals, and in review of private and public projects to assure they address transportation impacts.

— Scottsdale Mayor Mary Manross



Partnerships are the most important tool we have for delivering services to our communities. Whether you are discussing and making decisions about services like transportation, air quality or even domestic violence, a collaborative decision is always the best. I view MAG as the ultimate partnership in Arizona.

— Buckeye Mayor Bobby Bryant

Currently, 20 percent of our fleet is hybrid or alternative vehicles. When the vehicle is offered with an environment-friendly fuel option and capable of the demands we place on it, the town purchases such vehicles. We are hoping to further increase this percentage as we replace more vehicles and the market for vehicles with alternative fuels expands.

— Fountain Hills Mayor Wally Nichols, commenting on the town's efforts to preserve the environment through the use of alternative-fuel vehicles.



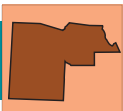
With ever-tightening budgets, regional efforts to provide services without taxing our residents is of utmost importance. In light of this, the cities of Avondale and Litchfield Park and the Maricopa County Community College District are partnering to build a public safety facility that will be built on the Estrella Mountain Community College Campus (EMCC) in Avondale. The facility will be constructed on land provided by the college, will be staffed and operated by Avondale with funding assistance from Litchfield Park, and will serve the residents of both communities, as well provide classrooms and offices for EMCC campus security. This is a great example of interagency partnership to create a win-win situation for all involved. Initial design of the facility is currently underway and the facility is expected to be operational by January 2010.

— Avondale Mayor Marie Lopez Rogers

The MAG Regional Council is one of Tempe's most important partnerships, as we work to create an economically, culturally and environmentally sustainable community. Together we have the opportunity to craft pragmatic and fiscally responsible solutions to the challenges our region faces.

— Tempe Mayor Hugh Hallman





Regional Profile Cave Creek Councilmember Dick Esser



Councilmember Dick Esser, Town of Cave Creek



Sub URBAN COWBOY

He's a cowboy, a conservationist, and a Cave Creek councilmember—and Dick Esser seems to have no trouble blending all three roles into one.

Perhaps that's no surprise when you consider that Esser grew up in rural Prescott, where his great grandfather served as a sergeant in the cavalry at Fort Whipple. At the same time, Esser learned at the knee of a father who spent his life in public service, eventually rising to become the city manager of Phoenix. Even when the junior Esser became an adult, his father Charles, encouraged him to tag along. Esser says he "learned by osmosis."

"He felt that it was time for me to learn something. So after I'd get off work, I'd go down and sit in his office. There was even a period of time when there were people in Phoenix

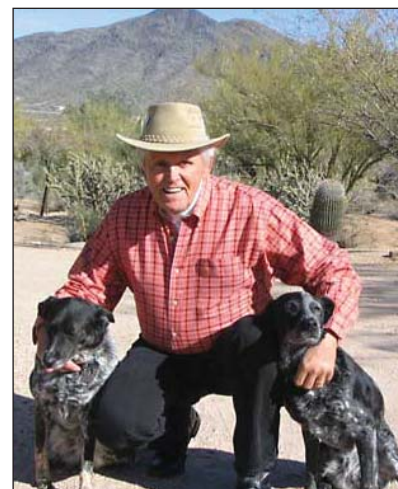
who thought I was an employee. I sat in a chair over by the wall and kept my mouth shut. But it was invaluable experience," he recalls.

Still, Esser said it's hard to reconcile the Phoenix of today with the wide-open spaces he remembers.

"I'm a fourth-generation Arizonan, so I experienced the demise of much of the Sonoran desert caused by the explosive Phoenix growth. There was a time in my life when I really didn't worry about the high Sonoran desert, because there was so much of it. And now...well, I wouldn't say I'm a preservationist, but I'm certainly a conservationist. And I'm very much aware of the destruction I've seen in the Phoenix area. It kind of makes me sad. I never thought it would happen," he says.

Perhaps that's why after his retirement from the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), where he worked for 33 years, Esser decided to continue his public service by applying for a position on the Cave Creek Planning and Zoning Commission.

"I suddenly realized we were somehow going to have to preserve some open space. I've always liked horses and have always been a supporter of the equestrian lifestyle. I witnessed what was happening to horse properties and boarding facilities as they were being forced out by development. Think of what happened to Scottsdale—the West's Most



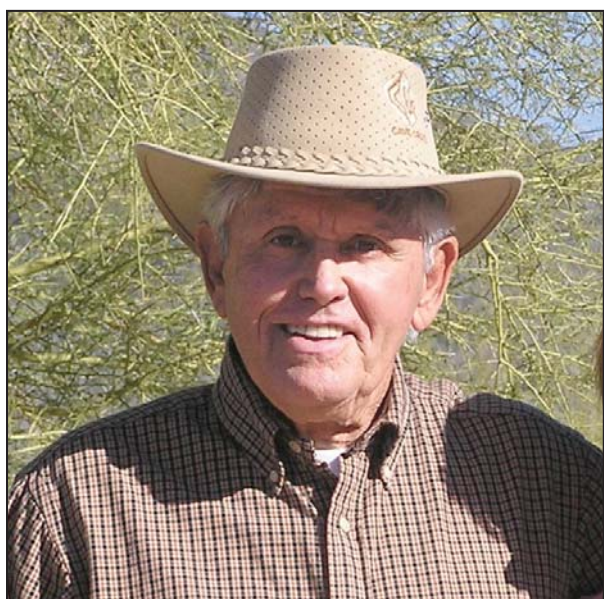
Councilmember Esser with two of his friends.

Western Town—so I said, 'okay, time to step up to the plate.' I got on the Planning and Zoning Commission, and the rest is history."

Esser says that the town of Cave Creek has many challenges: preserving open space, adding to equestrian trails, and many public works projects. Very high on the town's priority list is the annexation of 8.5 square miles of open land, with the stated objective of preserving the biggest part of it. The town has also purchased its first public utility, and this continues to be a major challenge, along with the construction of a large new wastewater treatment plant. Despite the modern improvements, Esser says Cave Creek remains "horse country."

"It's what Scottsdale used to be in the '50s, and we intend to keep it that way. We have very strict zoning ordinances, and we encourage developers to allow horse property," says Esser.

At the same time, Esser recognizes the importance of the business center of Cave Creek.



Councilmember Esser enjoys the high Sonoran desert.

Continued on next page

Councilmember Esser (continued from page 4)

"We preserve and protect our unique lifestyle in the core. We like to think that the core of Cave Creek, with its restaurants, bars and somewhat eclectic lifestyle, is a destination spot," he says. "We also have some high density areas along Carefree highway, and eventually that commercial development might be our savior in helping protect our rural lifestyle," he says.

And, while he helps to govern a town with a population of only 5,000, Esser says it doesn't prevent him from understanding his role on the MAG Regional Council.

"I don't think you can take a narrow view and think in terms of what's best for Cave Creek, you have to think in terms of what's best for the entire metropolitan area. I try to take an overview, a broad view of what will best serve the metropolitan area in the future," he says. "And I think as a planning agency, what MAG has done is great. They truly are the model for planning agencies, state and nationwide."

When asked about his most significant accomplishment, Esser says he would have to go back to his days as a land acquisition agent for ADOT during the often-sensitive Pima Freeway negotiations. After working for months to establish trust between ADOT and the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, the issues were resolved and the disputed eastern alignment of State Route 101 (9.5 miles north to south just east of Scottsdale) was allowed to go through. Esser received a meritorious service award for his work.

That was just one instance in which Esser served as a mediator in right-of-way disputes. During his

career with ADOT, he managed the Federal Relocation Law requiring relocation of hundreds of families, businesses, and nonprofit organizations within the state. It was a job that wasn't always easy, but one that he cared deeply about.

Esser and his staff tried to find areas to place them where they would be in the same church, same bank, and have access to the same transportation. "The benefits under the federal and state law are somewhat generous. I always operated on the top of that limit," says Esser. "I wanted to make sure they got the maximum benefits. So I think I enjoyed that, and I was very proud of what we did."

Esser has tried to pass along the values taught to him by his father to his two sons and ten grandchildren, including his passion for an active lifestyle. Esser, who lives with his wife, Holly, and their two dogs, once ran five marathons in a single year. He is also an avid hiker.


"My boys and I grew up hiking the Grand Canyon. In time we realized that we had been on every trail in the Grand Canyon. And there are a lot more of them than people know about—I think we came up with 60," he says.

One hike on Cave Creek/Carefree's Black Mountain, however, ended with a severe pain in his chest. Within days, Esser had undergone quadruple bypass surgery. Still, the slowdown was temporary. The 71-year old Esser says he's back in good shape, and plans to continue his public service. Mayor Vincent Francia is quoted as saying that the mountain probably saved Esser's life.

"A great many of my constituents



Dick Esser and his wife, Holly.

and public service colleagues are pressuring me to run again for a third term as councilman. My term doesn't expire until June '09, so let me answer that by saying, yes, I am considering it. My decision will be based on my health and energy level at that time. In the meantime, even if I decide not to run for Cave Creek Council, I will remain active in the pursuit of my interests," says Esser. "I'm very interested in affordable housing. I think we have many entry level people who have worked very hard getting an education, only to discover they can't find an affordable place to live close to where they work. Service to my state and town has been my life. I am eager to continue working for the betterment of my town and state and am sure many opportunities will present themselves to me." 



On June 25, 2008, MAG will honor individuals and partnerships that have demonstrated a commitment to regionalism through their cooperative efforts. The 2008 Desert Peaks Awards will be presented to groups and individuals in five major categories: Public Partnership, Public-Private Partnership, Professional Service, Regional Partnership, and Regional Excellence. The deadline for submitting applications is 5:00 p.m. March 7, 2008.

For more information, please contact Kelly Taft or Alana Chavez at (602) 254-6300. To download nomination instructions and electronic forms, please visit the Desert Peaks Web site: www.mag.maricopa.gov/project.cms?item=385

New Way of Thinking (continued from page 1)



Regional Council
Chair, James M.
Cavanaugh

looking at successes and applies those lessons to resolving issues.

Mayor Cavanaugh noted that one of our region's major strengths is the people who work in the field of human services.

"Nothing is greater than the commitment and competence of the people working to make life better for everyone in this region," he said.

Other communities have used Appreciative Inquiry to address diverse concerns ranging from budget cuts to child malnutrition. Amanda Trosten-Bloom with the Corporation for Positive Change, who is a nationally recognized speaker and facilitator, led the full-day workshop. She shared several success stories involving Appreciative Inquiry. The city of Denver, for example, used this process to prioritize services when faced with dramatic funding reductions. Instead of just cutting costs, Denver identified values to guide the process of reshaping how the city operated. This created opportunities for new partnerships and collaborations that had not existed before.



The group used Appreciative Inquiry to develop ideas for the Regional Plan to End Homelessness.



The yearly luncheon honors those dedicated to the field of human services.

For years, MAG has coordinated regional responses for homelessness in order to move people from the streets to self-sufficiency. When the Continuum of Care Committee came to MAG in 1999, efforts were undertaken to formalize these efforts into a regional plan. This resulted in the 2002 Regional Plan to End Homelessness. The plan was met with wide acclaim and was heralded as a national best practice. When the plan was updated in 2005, more than 75 percent of the goals had been achieved or were nearing completion. Now, three years later, the region is taking stock of past experiences and applying those lessons to the development of a new plan.

"When the first plan came out in 2002, it was one of the first in the entire country," said Phoenix Councilmember Greg Stanton, who chairs the Continuum of Care Committee. "That plan provides a firm foundation for us to apply what we have learned. The new Regional Plan to End Homelessness will provide action steps to bring the community closer to ending homelessness. Unlike the first plan, this new effort is utilizing Appreciative Inquiry as the vehicle for change," he said.

Continuum of Care member Trinity Donovan, a Chandler councilmember, was impressed with how well the process integrated voices of people not always heard in the planning process. "The voice of the community is so important to ensure that the policies and programs we are developing are responsive to what people need. This process engages and values everyone."

Interviews conducted before the workshop allowed for people to participate and be heard even if they could not attend the event. Small group discussions offered opportunities for every person to share, even in a room of more than 140 people.


Councilmember Steve Frate of Glendale, also a member of the Continuum of Care, was impressed with the adaptability of Appreciative Inquiry.

"We are using this process to address homelessness, but it's amazing how the same process can be used in a variety of settings with the same success. It doesn't matter if you are trying to cut a budget or house a family. It's important to build from strengths. We have many resources in

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this region. We need to embrace these resources to take positive action.”

"There is no greater champion in our region for housing and families," said Stanton, who also noted that SRP and Pinnacle West Corporation were sponsors of the workshop. "Public-private partnerships are critical to the success of this plan. No one sector is responsible for homelessness. No one sector can end it," he said.

The Continuum of Care Committee will continue using Appreciative Inquiry to develop the next Regional Plan to End Homelessness over the next six months. 

For more information on this effort, please contact Brande Mead at (602) 254-6300. For more information about the Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness please visit: www.mag.maricopa.gov/committee.cms?item=98



Continuum of Care
Regional Committee
on Homelessness

In an ongoing effort to empower teens to promote safe dating relationships, the Maricopa Association of Governments is hosting a competition allowing young people to create their own messages about dating violence.

When asked about their experiences in recent focus groups, local teens reported that they don't always feel safe in their dating relationships, their homes, or their communities. Fifty-one percent of teens participating in these conversations said that they, or someone they knew, had been involved in a violent dating relationship.

Teens stated that if they were in a violent or emotionally abusive relationship, they would most likely turn to their friends and/or look for information online. That is why the MAG Youth Empowerment Project was created, to enable teens to be that source of support for themselves and each other.


In a previous competition, teens were asked to create a 30-second video to be used as a public service announcement. In this second phase of competition, launched in September 2007, junior high and high school aged youth were invited to create radio ads and/or electronic invitations. The messages are designed to encourage teens to visit a teen-oriented Web site, *WebofFriends.org*. The Web site features information about dating violence and provides a list of local resources where teens can go for help in dealing with abuse issues. The site also allows teens to share their stories through articles, videos and previous PSA contest winning entries.

Twenty-nine entries were received: 13 audio entries and 16 electronic invitation designs. Entries were received from students at the Sun-Diamondbacks Education Academy, Free Arts of Arizona and the Avondale Youth Advisory Council.

A judging panel consisting of teens, youth program professionals, domestic violence professionals and public relations professionals met on January 24, 2008 to review the entries and determine the top three



winners for both categories. Entries were evaluated on their inclusion of specific messages, including a focus on verbal and emotional abuse. They were also judged on their appeal and ability to communicate these messages effectively to teens.

The top three winners in each category will receive check cards donated by American Express. Attendees will also have the opportunity to win a pair of Phoenix Suns tickets, which will be raffled off during the event. The tickets were provided by Waterbird Studios. 

The current contest focuses on how words can also hurt, as illustrated in this dating violence poster image.



Reconnaissance Study Outlines Future Planning Needs




A Statewide Mobility Reconnaissance Study to be released in March will document five key findings that address future transportation challenges, and will introduce action items for addressing the findings.

The findings will focus on five broad areas, including the status of statewide planning in Arizona, the need for new transportation corridors, funding, issues related to operations and maintenance, and the role transportation has in the state's economic viability. The recommendations will additionally be used to outline the best approach to statewide transportation planning in the future.

The study was implemented by a broad partnership known as "Building a Quality Arizona," which brings together elected officials from all of the regional planning agencies of

the state, along with the State Legislature, the Governor's Office, the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) and the business community.

One early recommendation from the study is already being implemented: to conduct statewide "framework" studies that will result in a comprehensive statewide transportation package that will guide infrastructure development. The framework studies will look at ways to get ahead of growth by identifying land use, socioeconomic and development patterns. They will also identify key transportation corridors and develop mobility strategies.

The Statewide Mobility Reconnaissance Study will be available in March 2008. 


For more information, visit www.bqaz.org.

Input Sought in Hidden Valley Framework Study

A study of future transportation options in areas surrounding Interstate 8 and Interstate 10 in the far West Valley is nearing completion, and residents are being encouraged to provide input on the base framework plan when it is released in March.

The I-8/I-10 Hidden Valley Roadway Framework Study is planning for an area bounded by 459th Avenue on the west, the Gila River on the north, I-10 on the east, and I-8 on the south. The study is looking at a variety of mobility alternatives, including new freeway alignments, extension of a proposed parkway system from the Hassayampa Valley to the south and east, and multimodal options to accommodate commuter and freight movements.

The study is being conducted in cooperation with the Arizona Department of Transportation, the Maricopa County Department of Transportation, the Pinal County Public Works Department, the cities of Goodyear and Maricopa, and the town of Buckeye.

The base framework plan being released in March represents a milestone for the project. The base plan was developed through consultation with its seven funding partners; more than 30 federal, state, and local agencies; and with input from more than 100 stakeholders, including representatives from the Gila River and Ak Chin Indian communities. 

To provide input on the study, please contact Bob Hazlett at (602) 254-6300.

MAG Moment



Retiring MAG Senior Project Manager Harry Wolfe received a certificate of appreciation from Regional Council Chair James Cavanaugh, highlighting Wolfe's 24 years of service to the region.

MAG Launches Regional Transit Framework Study



With high gas prices and increasing congestion, transit is becoming an increasingly important travel choice in the MAG region. To address the region's long range transit needs, the MAG Regional Council awarded a contract in December to undertake a Regional Transit Framework Study. The study will be jointly developed with Valley Metro, METRO, and MAG member agencies.

The study, scheduled to begin in February 2008, will establish a technical framework for guiding transit investments and decisions. The \$980,000 study will include a comprehensive evaluation of existing and future transit needs in the MAG region, and will establish a framework for integrating transit travel modes, such as bus, light rail, commuter rail, and other potential alternatives.


"This is one of the most comprehensive studies to identify transit solutions ever to be undertaken by MAG," said MAG Transit Planning Project Manager Kevin Wallace. "The study will be used to provide direct input into a statewide framework, which will in turn be used to update the state's transportation plan, MoveAZ," he said.

The studies and the development of a statewide transportation plan are currently the focus of a broad collaborative effort known as "Building a Quality Arizona" (see page 8). Like the other framework studies being conducted around the state, the Regional Transit Framework Study will look at how transit alternatives might complement growth, land use, and development patterns and best fit into mobility strategies.



The Transit Framework Study will look at existing and future transit travel modes such as bus service, commuter rail, light rail and dial-a-ride.

The Regional Transit Framework will identify transit policies, service priorities, and funding requirements for three scenarios. The *Basic Mobility Scenario* will include an incremental low cost expansion and potential acceleration of transit elements of the Regional Transportation Plan. The *Enhanced Mobility Scenario* will reflect a moderate increase in financial resources for public transit improvements, and will be integrated with land use plans and policies. The *Transit Choice Scenario* will raise public transit to a level that makes it competitive with automobiles for many trips in congested corridors. Land use integration/coordination and transit speed enhancements will be strongly emphasized to make transit more attractive to users. This scenario would require the highest financial investment in public transit capital and operating improvements.

The study will begin in February 2008 and will be completed early in 2009. MAG member agencies and the public will have numerous opportunities to provide input through focus groups, open houses, community workshops, agency workshops, and a telephone survey. 

For more information on the Regional Transit Framework Study, contact Kevin Wallace at kwallace@mag.maricopa.gov or by telephone at (602) 254-6300.



Unheralded “Specs and Details” Unifies MAG Agencies

Can you name the best-selling document in the MAG archives? The most downloaded file on the MAG Web site? Many may be surprised to learn that it is not the Regional Transportation Plan or latest air quality plan, but rather the MAG Uniform Standard Specifications and Details for Public Works Construction, better known as the MAG “Specs and Details.”

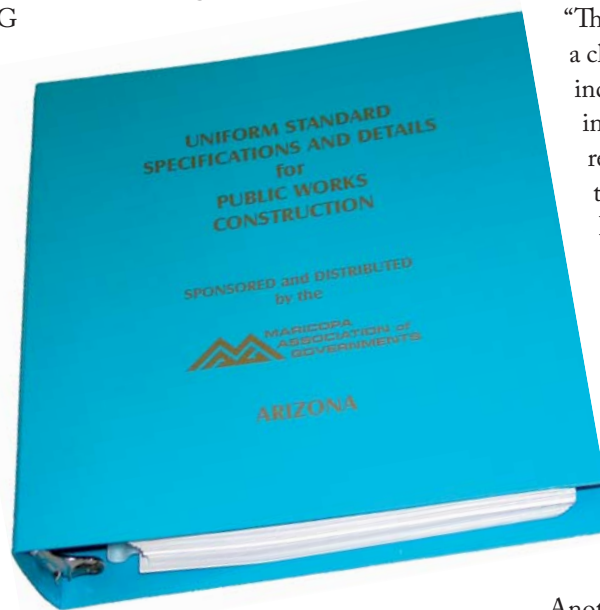
This document has been voluntarily adopted by MAG cities and towns and has become the de facto construction manual for public works projects throughout the region. The MAG specifications and details are used by manufacturers, contractors and local governments to ensure public works projects are constructed safely and according to accepted industry standards.

The document includes written specifications (the Specs), which provide definitive descriptions on the use of materials, methods of construction, and project evaluation requirements; and technical drawings, (the Details) that visually depict required construction materials and dimensions. The book includes requirements for earthwork, street construction and related work such as sidewalks and curbs, water and sewer construction, bridges, catch basins, and requirements for various materials such as asphalt, concrete and piping.

The group responsible for keeping the document up to date is the MAG Standard Specifications and Details Committee, which consists of representatives from member agency engineering departments and advisory members from the construction industry.

“The committee is a working partnership between government agencies and industry that enhances the quality of the region’s infrastructure,” says Committee Chair Robert Herz, who is a Maricopa County

engineer. “It ensures durable high quality at reasonable cost through the continuous quality improvement of standards that incorporate technical advances in construction and design.”



Herz says the committee process provides an open forum for discussions among the various agencies and industry, and the group relies on the experience of its members to create uniform standards that provide the most practical solutions.

Standardizing building materials and public works specifications was recognized as a need at MAG's very first meeting in April 1967. MAG published the first Uniform Standard Specifications and Details for Public Works Construction in 1978. A complete revision was done in 1998 and yearly updates have been made since then to incorporate the use of new materials and methods.

The committee is currently working on new revisions to the document. Cases now under consideration include a complete rewrite of the asphalt concrete materials and construction sections, the addition of plastic PVC catch basins, and reviewing current details for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Jeff Benedict, a committee member who represents the Arizona Chapter of the Associated General Contractors, has been a champion of revising the asphalt standards.

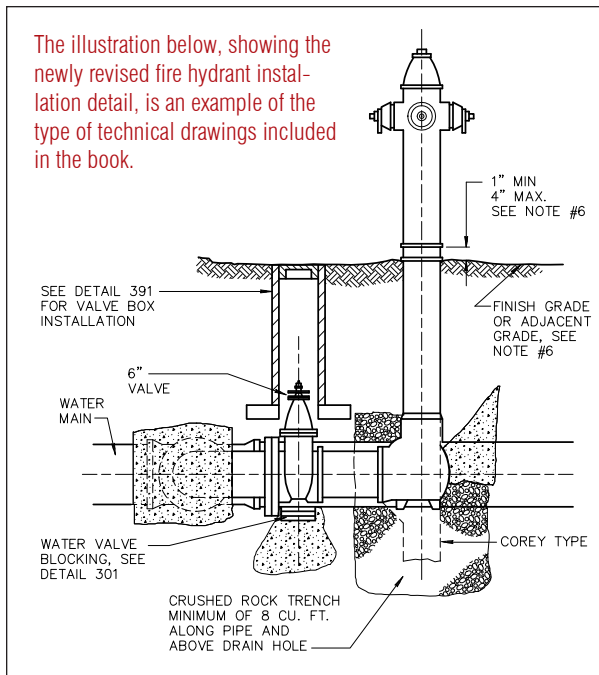
“The introduction of new binders, and a change in mix designs challenged the industry to make major changes. To incorporate the new technologies and remove outdated standards, the industry felt the rewrite was important,” says Benedict. He notes that the process of developing concise, workable specifications has taken three years. “The process included input from commercial laboratories, paving contractors, hot mix producers, and public agency engineers. The goal is to have a clear, workable, ‘living’ document that will be approved by the committee this year.”

Another important task for the committee is to share the best practices of the agencies, standardize them, and incorporate them into the MAG document for use by all jurisdictions. Often, city engineering departments will approve the use of new materials or construction methods by introducing a supplement to MAG standards. Over the years these “city supplements” have grown. While they may fit the needs of the individual agencies, differing standards can cause difficulty for contractors working on similar projects throughout the Valley, or on the same project when the project crosses jurisdictional boundaries.

Last year, MAG completed a project to gather, inventory and compare all member agency supplements. A working group of the committee is using information gathered from the study to target areas where city supplements can be reduced by incorporating them into the MAG document. The 2008 update includes a case sponsored by the city of Phoenix to standardize fire hydrants, and one sponsored by

Continued on page 11


The illustration below, showing the newly revised fire hydrant installation detail, is an example of the type of technical drawings included in the book.



Specs and Details (continued from page 10)

Maricopa County to incorporate its supplements to the concrete structures section. Mr. Herz anticipates additional cases this year.

“By creating a uniform, standard specification, agencies reduce the need for supplemental specifications and benefit from lower costs, since contractors can be more efficient in the use of the same materials and construction methods,” Herz says. “Standardizing other agency’s supplements into MAG’s Specs and Details also benefit smaller, fast-growing communities that do not have the engineering staff necessary to create their own specifications.”

While few outside of MAG are aware of the committee’s existence, Herz says the important work will continue. “The dedicated engineering professionals and industry experts serving on the MAG Specs and Details committee are committed to ensuring that, as our region continues to grow, MAG will continue to provide the technical standards our public works infrastructure requires,” he concluded. 

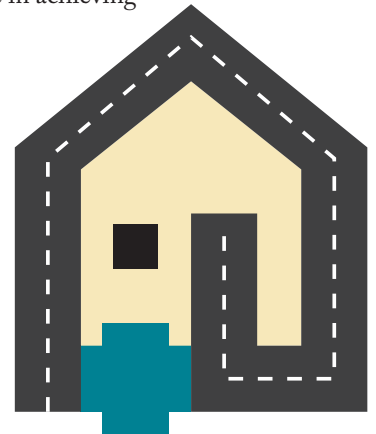
For more information about the Specifications and Details, please contact Gordon Tyus at (602) 254-6300.

Additional resources and an electronic version of the *2008 MAG Uniform Standard Specifications and Details for Public Works Construction* is available online at: mag.maricopa.gov/committee.cms?item=85.


Regional Conference Will Coordinate Housing and Human Services Transportation

On April 8, 2008, MAG will host a conference on the coordination of housing and human services transportation. The event will take place at the Desert Willow Conference Center located in Phoenix at 4340 East Cotton Center Boulevard, Suite 100. The concept for this event was born from the 2007 MAG Human Services Coordination Transportation Plan and the 2007 Regional Human Services Summit. Both efforts defined the need for increased coordination and recognized the benefit of a regional conference in achieving this goal.

During the all-day event, a mixture of workshops and plenary sessions will move 250 participants through dialogue about viable opportunities that will shape the region in years to come. A report of the research and discussions will follow the conference. A checklist of promising strategies for coordination and highlights about best practices will also be featured in the report.



The purpose of the event is to engage community stakeholders in sharing successful coordination strategies and identify methods to improve interregional mobility and housing options. This will result in people having a better quality of life because they can more easily maintain their homes and move throughout the region.

Fourteen different workshops will offer the most current information on topics such as transit-oriented development, sustainable designs for communities, universal design, and mobility management. One innovative workshop will literally take people “on the road” to illustrate how people with disabilities access transit and housing services. The lunchtime plenary session will feature leaders at the federal, state and regional levels in a debate about how best to embrace opportunities and successfully coordinate housing and transportation. At the last plenary session, participants will apply their own experience as well as lessons learned at the conference to develop the checklist to be published in the report. 

Sponsorship opportunities are available. For more information, please contact Amy St. Peter at (602) 452-5049, or astpeter@mag.maricopa.gov.

February

- 6th** 10:00 a.m. Intelligent Transportation Systems Committee
- 6th** 1:30 p.m. Standard Specifications and Details Committee
- 7th** 1:00 p.m. Domestic Violence Council
- 13th** 12:00 p.m. Management Committee
- 13th** 4:00 p.m. Water Quality Advisory Committee
- 14th** 1:00 p.m. Human Services Technical Committee
- 19th** 1:30 p.m. Regional Bicycle Task Force/
Pedestrian Working Group Joint Meeting
- 19th** 1:30 p.m. Planners Stakeholders Group
- 20th** 2:00 p.m. Building Codes Committee
- 20th** 4:00 p.m. Transportation Policy Committee
- 25th** 12:00 p.m. Regional Council Executive Committee
- 25th** 2:00 p.m. Continuum of Care Planning Subcommittee
- 26th** 10:00 a.m. Population Technical Advisory Committee
- 27th** 5:00 p.m. Regional Council
- 28th** 10:00 a.m. Transportation Review Committee
- 28th** 1:30 p.m. Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee

Parking is available under the building. Please ask for parking validation at the meeting. Transit tickets will be provided for those using transit. Bike racks are available at the entrance to the parking garage.

March

- 5th** 1:30 p.m. Standard Specifications and Details Committee
- 11th** 1:00 p.m. Street Committee
- 12th** 10:00 a.m. Intelligent Transportation Systems Committee
- 12th** 12:00 p.m. Management Committee
- 13th** 1:00 p.m. Human Services Technical Committee
- 17th** 12:00 p.m. Regional Council Executive Committee
- 17th** 2:00 p.m. Continuum of Care Planning Subcommittee
- 18th** 1:30 p.m. Regional Bicycle Task Force/
Pedestrian Working Group Joint Meeting
- 19th** 2:00 p.m. Building Codes Committee
- 19th** 4:00 p.m. Transportation Policy Committee
- 20th** 10:00 a.m. Telecommunications Advisory Committee
- 24th** 2:00 p.m. Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homeless
- 25th** 10:00 a.m. Population Technical Advisory Committee
- 26th** 5:00 p.m. Regional Council
- 27th** 10:00 a.m. Transportation Review Committee
- 27th** 1:30 p.m. Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee

All meetings, unless indicated otherwise, will be held in the conference rooms located in the MAG offices on the second floor of the building, 302 N. 1st Avenue, Phoenix.

April

- 2nd** 10:00 a.m. Intelligent Transportation Systems Committee
- 2nd** 1:30 p.m. Standard Specifications and Details Committee
- 3rd** 1:00 p.m. Domestic Violence Council
- 9th** 12:00 p.m. Management Committee
- 10th** 1:00 p.m. Human Services Technical Committee
- 14th** 12:00 p.m. Regional Council Executive Committee
- 15th** 10:00 a.m. Human Services Coordinating Committee
- 15th** 1:30 p.m. Regional Bicycle Task Force/
Pedestrian Working Group Joint Meeting
- 15th** 2:30 p.m. Planners Stakeholders Group
- 16th** 2:00 p.m. Building Codes Committee
- 16th** 4:00 p.m. Transportation Policy Committee
- 22nd** 10:00 a.m. Population Technical Advisory Committee
- 22nd** 10:00 a.m. Transportation Safety Committee
- 23rd** 5:00 p.m. Regional Council
- 24th** 10:00 a.m. Transportation Review Committee
- 24th** 1:30 p.m. Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee

The dates, times and locations of all meetings may change. Other committees not listed here may meet during these months.

For confirmation call (602) 254-6300, or visit the Web site: www.mag.maricopa.gov/meetings.cms

The MAGAZine newsletter is available in electronic format and in Spanish on the MAG Web site: www.mag.maricopa.gov/project.cms?item=433



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